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# MEETING HOUSE ECHOES

Edith A. O'Leary Senior Center

Spring 2016 - Volume 39

North Reading, MA 01864

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## **Dept. of Elder Affairs**

Tel: 978-664-5600

Email: mprenney@northreadingma.gov

## **Senior Center**

157 Park Street  
Third Meeting House  
on the Common

## **Senior Center Hours:**

Mon.-Thur. 8am-4pm

Fri. 8am-1pm

## **Director**

Mary S. Prenney

## **Clerk**

Mark Meehl

**Pgm. Mgr.** Jean Fitzgerald

## **Van Driver**

Mechele Cronin

## **Meal Site Managers**

Ron Visconti, Brenda Bugden

## **Home Delivered Meals**

**Driver** Donna Ruck

## **Council on Aging Board**

Atty. Brian Snell, Chair

Maureen Donato, Secretary

Rich Wallner V. Chair

Joe Veno

Frances Cheney

## **Representatives to**

## **Council on Aging**

Lt. Mark Zimmerman,

N. R. Police Department

Deputy Chief

Barry Galvin,

N. R. Fire Department

Selectman Steve O'Leary

## **Friends of the COA**

## **Officers**

Hugo Wiberg III, Pres.

Angela Mauceri, V.Pres.

Tom DeSwarte, Treas.

Jean Fitzgerald, Sec'y.

## COUNCIL ON AGING MISSION STATEMENT

The Council on Aging advocates for older adults by helping to meet their needs in areas of health, economic, social and cultural welfare.

The Council encourages maximum independence and seeks to improve the quality of life of citizens of the Town of North Reading.

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### *From the Director — Mary Prenney*

Let me start by saying "Welcome Back, Katharine" – we truly missed you. I want to thank all of our readers who called with concerns about not receiving the Winter issue. It's nice to know our newsletter is read and appreciated!

Hopefully by the time this Spring issue goes to press, we are all starting to see some green popping up in our gardens. If you remember (and how can any of us forget!) this time last year, any green was still buried under two feet of snow! We had a great winter at the Senior Center. Even though the weather wasn't always perfect, we continued to run all of our programs and hosted some great parties – and participation was more than expected. I guess the word is out about our great "free" programs. As you read through, I hope you find something that piques your interest and encourages you to join us at the Center this Spring. You'll undoubtedly see some old friends, or better, make new ones.

### *From the Editor — Katharine Barr*

Yes — you're right. We missed the Winter issue. I was very laid up from late summer on, and by Christmas time, had to have a total knee replacement. Followed by a second stay in a rehab facility. Not my favorite Christmas! But the whole experience did teach me a few things which I'd like to pass along. They just might help a difficult time be a little easier.

- Don't try to second-guess your doctor! Follow their instructions as best you can. But do discuss with him/her any instructions you find difficult to accomplish.

- Ask your doctor to identify every medication you are being prescribed (and write it down), and why you are taking it. You have a right to know this.

- AND MOST IMPORTANT – DON'T GIVE UP! It may be difficult at times, but a positive attitude contributes immensely to recovery. Once I decided to stop feeling sorry for myself, it's amazing how quickly things began to turn around! It works!

***Our goal is to help North Reading Elders age safely in place with dignity and independence in the homes and community they helped build...because there is no place like home!!!***

## DINING AND TRANSPORTATION

### Senior Dining at the Center

Mon. — Fri., noon, \$2.00 donation  
(Call before 10:30AM the day before)

### Home Delivered Meals

(formerly Meals on Wheels)  
Mystic Valley Elder Services  
(781) 324-7705, Ext. 300

### FREE Van Transportation

In town, for medical appointments,  
shopping, local errands, Senior Center  
Family Medical Center, Wilmington  
Lahey Satellite Clinic, Wilmington  
(Call one day ahead to arrange a ride)

**The following Senior Center Programs are FREE  
unless otherwise noted**

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

### • Blood Pressure Screening

Mondays 1PM — no appointment needed  
At Edith A. O'Leary Senior Center

- **BEST** — Pat Brennan, Instructor  
(Balance Energy Strength Training)  
Meets 9AM Monday mornings and works  
toward strong bones, energized muscles, better  
balance.

- **Exercise** — Emma Palmer, Instructor  
Meets 9:30AM Tuesdays and Thursdays, and  
involves gentle stretching, toning,  
strengthening.

### • SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders)

A counselor is available every Tuesday  
afternoon— by appointment only — to help answer  
questions and fill out applications.

### • Care Options Councilors

from Mystic Valley Elder Services is available — by  
appointment only — to offer information, advice and  
education in confidential setting, to elders and their  
families.

### Assistance with Fuel Oil and Food Stamps

(SNAP) Applications is available at the Center  
call for an appointment.

## ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE CENTER:

### • Card Games

Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00PM

### • Bingo

Wednesdays 1:15PM

### • Senior Chorus — *Marcia Cutlip, Director*

Mondays 10:30AM. Singing is good for  
mind, body and soul!

### • Wii Bowling

Mondays 1:00PM

### • Bridge

Tuesdays at 1PM

### • Project Linus Coffee Hour

1st Friday of the month, 10 AM

## "Silver Alert" Program

This program is geared to families and residents that  
have Alzheimer's disease or some other cognitive im-  
pairment that might cause a person to wander and be-  
come lost.

Voluntary information submitted to the Police Dept.  
would help locate the missing person by having on rec-  
ord certain biographical information stored at the North  
Reading Police Station.

Please stop by and take an application, or for more in-  
formation, contact Sgt. Derek Howe, NRPD  
(dhowe@nRPD.org).

## Need a Ride? Call TRIP.

If you need to go places, and you don't or can't drive,  
here's an easy solution. Designate a friend, neighbor as  
your TRIP driver and that person will take you wherev-  
er you need to go. As your designated driver, he/she  
will be fully reimbursed for mileage they drive you. So  
it's a win-win situation for everyone! To sign up, con-  
tact MVES at 781-324-7705. Get out and enjoy life!

## Eating Local – It's Fun!

Join us in our continuing support of our local  
restaurants. Help us celebrate our third year of  
enjoying lunch in North Reading's favorite local spots.  
Diners are responsible for their own meals and gratuity.  
But the van service — and camaraderie are FREE. New  
diners are always welcome. This is a fun way to go out  
for lunch and meet with old and new friends. Some of  
the destinations for this Spring and Summer are: April –  
Joe Fish; May – Grille 19; June – Hornet's Nest for  
takeout to a picnic at Ipswich River Park;

## **A Message from the SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone)**

### **Program:**

You may have heard that the Medicare Part B premium is going up. However, this is not true for most people with Medicare.

Most people who had their Part B premium deducted from their Social Security check in 2015 will continue to pay \$104.90 per month. The reason is that there was no cost of living increase in social Security benefits for 2015, and there is a law preventing the amount of one's benefit check from going down. For those who were not getting Social Security benefits in 2015, and those who enroll in Part B in 2016, most will pay \$121.80 per month.

There are exceptions, based on income. And people with limited income and assets may qualify for a program that will pay their premium.

For further assistance with any Medicare issue, contact the SHINE Program. Trained SHINE counselors offer free, confidential counseling on all aspects of Medicare and related health insurance programs. Call the Regional SHINE office at Mystic Valley Elder Services in Malden at 781-388-4845. Please leave a message and a counselor will return your call within two business days.

### **Have Questions About Services or Health Insurance Issues?**

As always, the Center is available to answer questions you may have about services or help you or a family member navigate the ever-changing world of health insurance options. By the end of this calendar year, our Senior (60+) population in North Reading will have reached close to 22.5% of the Town's population. So stay tuned to some planned new "Ideas & Initiatives" that will help all of us who wish to live in a healthy aging community come into fruition in the great Town of North Reading!

### **Help Stop Fraud!**

From Derek Howe, NRPD

Once again, scammers, posing as utility company employees, are calling local residents, threatening to shut off customers' gas or electricity unless swift payment is made.

**How it Works:** You get a call from someone who says they're from your utility company, telling you your bill is overdue and if you don't pay up FAST, your power will be shut off. They say they want the money NOW, usually through untraceable payment cards or a wire transfer.

**What You Should Know:** Utility companies never demand instant payment over the phone. They usually have several options for payment of overdue accounts, provided for the convenience of their customers.

**What You Should Do:** Don't panic! Hang up and report the call to your utility company and your local police, giving them as much information as you can. Do NOT provide the caller with ANY financial information over the phone.

## **Got Unused or Outdated Prescription Drugs?**

Sgt. Derek Howe, NRPD

Sgt. Howe reminds residents there is a free, safe, anonymous way to dispose of unused or expired prescription medications and hypodermic needles that are capped or in a special "sharps" container. There are MedReturn Drug Collection units available in the lobby at the North Reading Police Department (150 Park Street) where they can be disposed of — anonymously — at any time. If you have any questions about this program, please call the police station at (978) 664-3131.

## **Join Us For FREE "Movie Matinees"**

Movies are shown on Thursdays at 1:15, except where noted\*. No reservations necessary! Just show up — and bring a friend!

March 18      The Age of Adeline

April 21      Ricki and the Flash

May 19      Mr. Holmes

June 9      Hot Pursuit

July 14      \* Disney Movie (showing at 5PM, serving pizza and salad for a small donation)

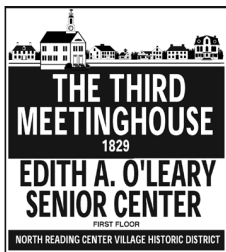
## **In Memory of/In Honor of" Envelopes.**

Envelopes are available at the O'Leary Senior Center to remember a deceased individual, or to honor an individual or group with a donation to the "North Reading Friends of the Council on Aging." Donations will help us fund the good works of the Center and the population it services. Envelopes may be picked up at the Center during regular hours: Mon./Thurs. 8AM – 4PM; Fri. 8AM – 1PM.

## **Free Tax Preparation**

This year, AARP Foundation is again providing free tax assistance and preparation for North Reading taxpayers with low-to-moderate income, through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program. Now in its 46th year, this is the nation's largest free tax assistance and preparation service, giving special attention to those age 60 and older. You do not need to be a member of AARP or a retiree to use this free service. Appointments can be made through the O'Leary Senior Center on Wednesdays, February 3 – April 13 at the Wilmington Town Hall – OR – Thursdays, Feb. 4 – April 14 at St. Anthansius Parish Center in Reading. Saturday morning walk-ins (no appointment necessary) are available at the Reading Memorial Light Dept. building (rear – cafeteria), Feb. 6 – April 9.

Please call the Senior Center at 978-664-5600 for an appointment. Note: Transportation will be provided free of charge to St. Anthansius in Reading ONLY.



**NORTH READING ELDER AFFAIRS**  
**157 PARK STREET**  
**NORTH READING, MA 01864**

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SPRING 2016 VOL. 39

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The distribution of this Newsletter made possible by a Formula Grant and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs

### **Save These Dates:**

- March 17: St. Patrick's Day Party at 1PM, with Carrtunes
- April 14: Spring Fling – call for more details
- May 5: Mother's Day Celebration at 1PM, with Greg Curtis
- June 16: Father's Day Celebration at 1PM, with Jim Barrineau
- June 21: Dinner and Delvena Theater at 5PM (sponsored by a N. Reading Cultural Council Grant)
- July 28: Annual BBQ at 1PM, with Mel Simons

### **North Reading Food Pantry**

The Food Pantry, located in the North Reading Town Hall on North Street, is open Mondays 9 – 10:00AM, and every 1st and 3rd Monday 7:00 – 8:00PM. Transportation is available on Monday mornings. Please call in advance to arrange a ride. For times, dates, other details, and to make a reservation, please call the Center at 978-664-5600.

### **As Always, Our Warmest Thanks to:**

- Meadow View Center for Wednesday Bingo Donuts
- Washington St. Dunkin' Donuts for Tues. morning treats
- Sue Kramer for always keeping our landscaping looking amazing
- N. Reading DPW for keeping our parking lots and stairs safe this winter
- All who continue to donate yarn and fleece for "Project Linus"
- All who donate greeting cards for resale at the Center
- Billie Skerrett for the fall table cloth and raffle baskets
- Maureen Doucette for the raffle planter
- Serendipity Circle of Union Congregational Church for Meals on Wheels gifts
- Friends of the COA for Thanksgiving and Christmas plants for Meals on Wheels clients
- Representative and Mrs. Brad Jones and Senator Bruce Tarr for hosting our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner!

## **8 Reasons You Should Not Feel Guilty About Getting Help for a Loved One:**

The decision to place an older parent in home care is a difficult one. You have nothing to feel guilty about choosing home care for your loved one, because there are many benefits to what you are doing for them.

### **Proper Care is Provided**

You may not have the experience needed to properly care for your older loved one. Turning to an expert in senior care can be quite a relief. You can feel good about them being in good hands.

### **Care is Provided by Those Who Understand**

Getting older can be as troubling mentally as much as physically. A trained senior care worker has the knowledge and understanding elders need at this stage in life.

### **It Improves the Relationship With Your Loved One**

When you allow someone else to handle the trials of senior care, you improve your relationship with your parent. So time spent together is quality time.

### **You Can Show You Love Your Parent in Many Ways**

You do not have to do everything for your parent. You can also show love in the way you interact with them, through what else you provide, and how you behave around that person.

### **You Learn to Trust Yourself**

Many people don't trust themselves to make the right decision. After deciding on home care, and seeing how it helps your loved one and your family, you'll feel better about yourself, and be able to trust yourself more.

### **It Helps Vindicate Your Decision**

You aren't neglecting an aging parent, you are making sure he/she is getting the right care. This can improve your self-esteem, which, in turn, can cause great things to happen in other aspects of your life.

### **It Provides Benefits For Your Family**

Family caregiving is stressful, and affects your whole family. By choosing home care, you eliminate that stress, so you can be happy around the important people in your life.

### **You Receive Care, Too.**

Many home care centers have support groups or someone at the center that offers time for family members to ask questions. This can be very helpful as you cope with the changes of old age. Be good to yourself, so you can be good to your aging parent or other family member. This stage of life should be filled with good feelings and times, so you can create memories you'll treasure forever.

## **Free Passes to N.R. High School Games for Seniors!**

Got a grandchild, niece or nephew playing High School baseball, soccer, or other games? North Reading Senior Citizens can get FREE passes to all regular season High School games. Simply identify yourself as a Senior Citizen — and enjoy the game!

## **Protect Yourself In An Electrical Emergency**

Do you have CRITICAL MEDICAL EQUIPMENT that would be disabled if there was a loss of electricity? This might be oxygen or some other device. It is important that municipal emergency services be aware of this, so that you will have immediate assistance in an emergency. This information will be entered in a confidential "911 DISABILITY INDICATOR FORM" that is available through the Senior Center or North Reading Police Department.

## **Friends of NRCOA Looking For Help With 2016 Trips**

The North Reading Friends of the Council on Aging are looking for a few new, enthusiastic members to help with planning their 2016 day trips. We want these to be the best trips ever! Please consider joining us and adding your valuable input. Call Maureen at 978-664-6643. Trips suggested so far include:

Boston Symphony Orchestra – Friday, April 8 (\$61)

Boston Harbor Cruise – Wednesday, June 29 (\$??)

Essex River Cruise – Thursday, July 21 (\$??)

Mystic (CT) Seaport – Monday, August 22 (??)

Clambake – Tuesday, August 30 (??)

## **Home Fire Prevention**

Barry J. Galvin, Deputy Chief NRFD

All smoke detectors should be replaced every 10 years. All carbon monoxide detectors should be replaced every 8 years. The N. Reading Fire Dept. has a program that can provide free replacement and installation of these detectors. We have already had 12 fire deaths in Massachusetts this year. Many of these deaths occurred in homes that did not have working smoke alarms. If you are in need of detectors, please call the Senior Center at 978-664-5600.

## **Become Your Own Patient Advocate**

Sue Swansburg, RN, N. Reading Board of Health

According to AMAC magazine (Assn. for Mature American Citizens), when it comes to medical matters, we must be vigilant in looking out for ourselves.

- When going to a doctor's appointment, write down everything you want to discuss with the doctor, so you don't forget anything. Ask questions if you don't understand something.
- Make sure you understand why you are taking all your medications, and keep a list of those medications with you at all times.
- Don't feel embarrassed to ask for a second opinion.
- Always check your medical bills to make sure they are correct.
- Fill out a Living Will which will document your wishes in health care decisions, in case you are unable to communicate. Discuss with your doctor your wishes to be a DNR (do not resuscitate) in case the situation arises.

## **News From the Friends of North Reading Council in Aging,**

Angela Mauceri, President

### **SAVE THIS DATE! Town Wide Yard Sale**

Plans are moving ahead for the Annual Town Wide Yard Sale on Saturday, April 30, 2016, from 8AM to 2PM. There is still time to clean out the attic and garage and make money from that clutter we all have. "One man's trash is another man's treasure," as the saying goes. Applications can be found on the North Reading town website ([northreading.ma.gov](http://northreading.ma.gov)) in the Elder Services tab, at the Edith O'Leary Senior Center, or by calling Jean at 978-664-4095.

Applications must be submitted by April 15, to secure a space on the map. Remember that for a small application fee, the Friends of the North Reading Council on Aging will do all the multimedia publicity and your location will be noted on a map available for distribution the week before the sale, so customers can be prepared to find the best deals. This is a town-wide event that draws customers from an extremely wide area, since the multimedia publicity is quite extensive. What a fun way to spend a Spring day!

## **Meditation Presentation Offered at the Library**

Sharon Kelleher, Director, N.R. Memorial Library

Thursday, March 31 at 7PM, join David Eyerman, owner of Clear and Now Holistic Healing Center, to explore the benefits of meditation, getting a glimpse into how it can help you ease anxiety and improve your everyday quality of life. This talk is perfect for those who:

- Have wanted to try meditation, but don't know where or how to start.
- Have tried meditating and got frustrated.
- Have experience with meditation and are looking to deepen their practice.

The presentation will include a short guided meditation practice, lecture, and open discussion. Please register at: [flintmemoriallibrary.org](http://flintmemoriallibrary.org)

## **Learn Watercolor Painting .**

If you've ever wanted to learn to paint with watercolors, here's your chance! William Duke, well-known local artist with a studio in Salisbury MA, leads a class at the Center on this technique. Classes are at 1PM on Tuesdays, once a month. The \$20 cost includes all materials.

## **Oral Hygiene and Heart Disease — Is There a Connection?**

For nearly a century, doctors have been warning their patients that being negligent about oral hygiene may lead to heart problems down the road. While this has never been definitively proven, still doctors have some answers about what your teeth can tell you about your heart.

Patients without their own teeth are twice as likely to die from heart disease as patients who still have their teeth. They're also 85% more likely to suffer cardiovascular death, and nearly as likely to suffer a stroke. Each individual tooth you lose increases the likelihood you will suffer from a number of serious conditions, including hypertension, diabetes, and obesity.

People with healthier mouths tend to have healthier hearts, as well. For everyone else, the best way to improve the health of your heart probably isn't to be earnest about flossing — although that's a good habit to have! But if you focus on fixing the shared risk factors for periodontal and heart disease, you'll be able to do two things that are good for your health, instead of just one!